

Parent Advisory Committee

O a k l a n d S c h o o l s S p e c i a l E d u c a t i o n

Early Resolution is the Best Solution!

Five organizations collaborated to create a new parent-friendly helpful document entitled: *Special Education Informal Dispute Resolution Processes, An Oakland County Parent's Guide*. In only three pages, the basics of communicating effectively between home and school, requesting a service for your child, IEPT meetings, Facilitated IEPT Meetings, Local Resolution Processes and Mediation are explained.

The goal of the complete guide is “*to encourage early and meaningful collaboration between home and school in order to facilitate the best possible outcomes for every student receiving special education services.*” Targeted primarily to parents, the guide can assist all who need information about how to resolve disputes by collaborative means. It reflects in part the proposed dispute resolution policy developed in 2007 by the Michigan Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services. The guide is now available thanks to the financial support of the Autism Society of America- Oakland County Chapter.

When accessed through a web site, the guide is interactive with hot links that take you directly to the specific page of a site that is needed to make a request in Oakland County or review the information you need. The color-coded flowcharts and hot links will take you on a straight path through the confusing special education advocacy maze.

The guide notes that informal dispute resolution processes as described throughout the brochure can be used before or after filing a complaint. It also notes that training in collaborative communication and conflict resolution skills can help parents and educators use these processes more effectively.

The guide provides contact numbers and web sites for readers wanting more information or assistance. The five organizations that contributed to the guide are:

- The Oakland Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Committee
- Oakland Schools
- The Autism Society of America – Oakland County Chapter
- The Arc of Oakland County
- Michigan Special Education Mediation Program

You can access the hotlinks or download the guide on your home computer through the following links:

- www.asaoakland.org on the Home Page,
- www.thearcoakland.org under Advocacy,
- www.oakland.k12.mi.us under Families, Special Needs, Special Education, Compliance, Dispute Resolution, under Commentary click Informal Dispute Resolution Processes. The quick link is <http://www.oakland.k12.mi.us/Portals/0/SpecialEd/Oakland%20County%20Parents%20guide%20for%20disput%20resolution.pdf>